

ILRS WEBSITE REDESIGN

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Abstract

The ILRS website, <http://ilrs.gsfc.nasa.gov>, is the central source of information for all aspects of the service. The website provides information on the organization and operation of ILRS and descriptions of ILRS components, data, and products. Furthermore, the website provides an entry point to the archive of these data and products available through the data centers. Links are provided to extensive information on the ILRS network stations including performance assessments and data quality evaluations. Descriptions of supported satellite missions (current, future, and past) are provided to aid in station acquisition and data analysis. The current format for the ILRS website has been in use since the early years of the service. Starting in 2010, the ILRS Central Bureau began efforts to redesign the look and feel for the website. The update will allow for a review of the contents, ensuring information is current and useful. This poster will detail the proposed design including specific examples of key sections and webpages.

ILRS Website Redesign

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ABSTRACT

The ILRS website, <http://ilrs.gsfc.nasa.gov>, is the central source of information for all aspects of the service. The website provides information on the organization and operation of ILRS and descriptions of ILRS components, data, and products. Furthermore, the website provides an entry point to the archive of these data and products available through the data centers. Links are provided to extensive information on the ILRS network stations including performance assessments and data quality evaluations. Descriptions of supported satellite missions (current, future, and past) are provided to aid in station acquisition and data analysis. The current format for the ILRS website has been in use since the early years of the service. Starting in 2010, the ILRS Central Bureau began efforts to redesign the look and feel for the website. The update will allow for a review of the contents, ensuring information is current and useful. This poster will detail the proposed design including specific examples of key sections and webpages.

1 Website Style

The redesigned ILRS website is divided into six main sections (level 1 pages) that are accessible through the top horizontal navigation bar:

- About ILRS
- Network
- Missions
- Science
- Data & Products
- Technology

Horizontally, each page is divided into three sections: Top Banner, Content, and Bottom Footer. The top banner section contains the ILRS branding, a search box, and links to the IAG and GGOS. Clicking on the ILRS' logo or text in the banner will always return the user to the ILRS home page. The middle content section contains the page heading, the navigation (both top and left side) as well as the page content itself. The bottom footer section contains required NASA GSFC content such as contacts, date of last update, and policy statements. The footer also includes the GGOS logo which links to the GGOS website.

The new design for the ILRS website also uses a vertical, multi-column layout. Both horizontal (persistent on all pages) and vertical (on lower level pages) menus are used for navigation through the site. This presentation provides extensive information in an organized fashion allowing the user to easily find main topics of interest. Rotating images are placed on the home page and initial pages of each main section.

Drop-down menus from the horizontal navigation bar allow for quick navigation to the initial, or level 1, pages within each main section. Navigation within these sections, to level 2, 3, etc. pages is accomplished through links on the left vertical navigation column.

All links to pages outside of the ILRS website open a new browser window, which further emphasizes that the user is leaving the ILRS website.

2 Site Layout

2.1 Home Page

The new design for the ILRS home page (the Level 0 page of the ILRS website), shown in Figure 1, includes three main logical areas: ILRS Overview (left panel), Welcome and Highlights, (center panel), and lists of Recent News/Meetings/Publications (right panel). Popular pages are included in a “quick links” section to allow users to easily navigate to these important sections of the website. This organization allows for quick access to prime content.

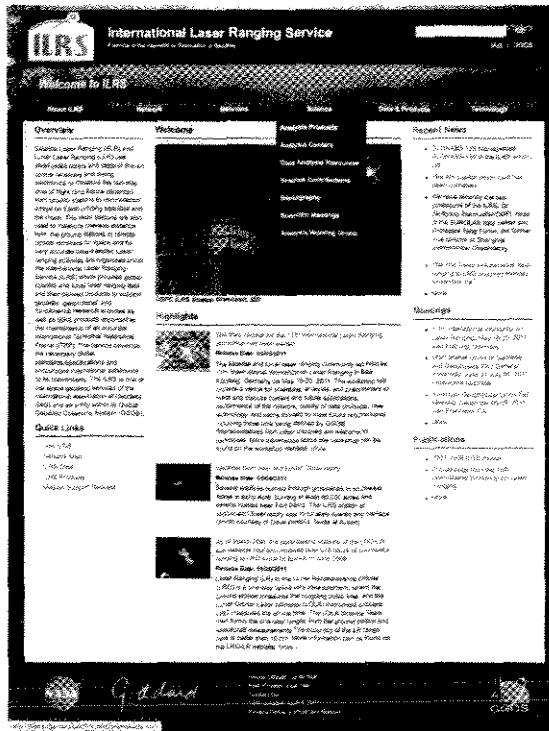


Figure 1. Design for New ILRS Home Page

The Highlights section contains brief science, mission, network stories with pictures and links to complete text. Brief lists of recent news, upcoming meetings, and recent publications link to more complete information.

2.1 Lower Level Pages

2.1.1 Level 1 Pages

The Level 1 pages are the top-most pages for each of the main sections of the ILRS website: About ILRS, Network, Missions, Science, Data & Products, and Technology. Examples of Level 1 pages are shown in Figures 2 and 3.

The Level 1 page of each section contains three columns. The left column provides a list of main navigation areas as well as “quick links” which are links to popular pages within the current section. The center section is the main text area for the page. This includes an image followed by text highlighting important topics of the section. Images on these pages rotate through a selection of content-related photos/diagrams/plots. Finally, the third, right-most column lists recent news (once again, section-specific) meetings, and publications.

Each main section is colored uniquely to further emphasize the content and location within the ILRS website. This convention helps the user locate the page within the site. The colors persist through the shading of the background

image, horizontal bars, and background coloring of the drop-down menu items as the user passes their mouse over each selection.

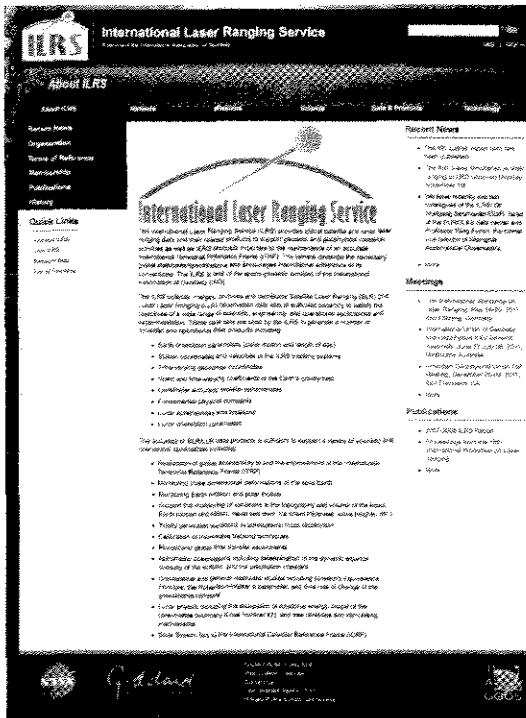


Figure 2. Design for Level 1 Page (About ILRS)

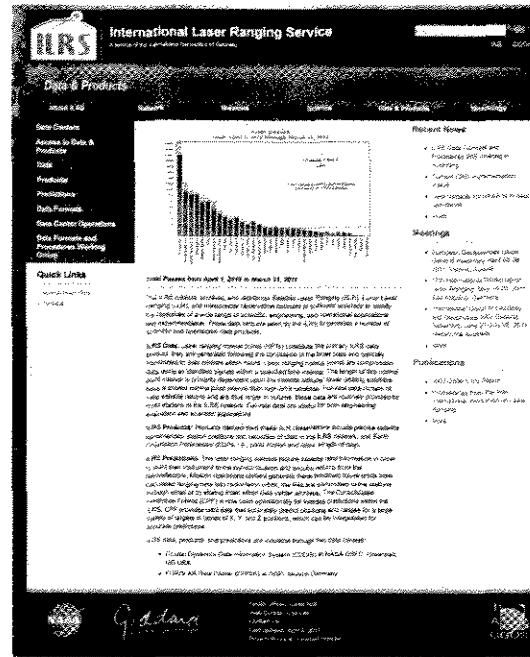


Figure 3. Design for Level 1 Page (Data & Products)

2.1.2 Level 2 (and Lower) Pages

Level 2, 3, etc. pages use a two-column layout that consists of left column and a main content section. The left column contains a navigation area and a list of “quick links” which are links to popular pages within the current section of the website. The second column contains the main text for the page. An example level 2 page within the About ILRS section of the website is shown in Figure 4.

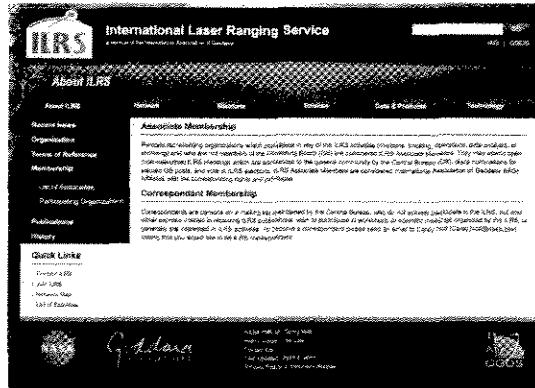


Figure 4. Design for Level 2 Page within the About ILRS Section

3 Future Plans

The ILRS website redesign team continues to fine-tune various aspects of the look-and-feel for the site. Content from the current website is being migrated to the new site, taking care to validate and update content and links. ILRS colleagues can view the new site at <http://ilrs.gsfc.nasa.gov/new>. Comments on the design are welcome and should be sent to ilrs-web@lists.nasa.gov. The team hopes to have an initial draft of the new site available for public testing during the fall of 2011.

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